

Paper Parameters

- The paper is worth 10% of your final grade.
- Due date: September 18
- Your final paper should be at least 1,000 words long.
- Your final paper should be submitted via Canvas as a word or pdf file.

The Assignment

- Write an essay on a topic that uses two or three **primary sources (i.e. documents)** written between 1491 and 1815.
 - What is a primary source?
 - Possible sources for documents: *American Yawp*, a book, or on-line.
 - Your essay should compare and/or contrast the documents you have chosen.
 - Your paper, you must also provide historical context for the documents.
 - Sources: *American Yawp* and class lectures
 - You are welcome to do additional research for this paper but are not required to do so.

What to Do

1. Pick a topic

- Build from a document you would like to write about.

or

- Build from a topic you would like to write about.

- Choose your documents

- You are welcome to use documents we have read in class.
- Be sure to pick documents that have some kind of relationship.
- Picking documents that talk about similar issues from different points of view work well.
- If you need help finding a document, I am happy to help.

What to do

2. Analyze the documents

- Who is the author? Who is his/her intended audience?
- What is the purpose of this document?
- What is the tone of the document?
- What is the document's main point?
- What are the document's possibilities and limitations for studying this time period? In other words, what can and can't we learn from it?
- How do these documents relate to one another? Do they agree or disagree on basic issues? How and why? Be sure to be open to more complex relationships than simple agreement or disagreement.

What to Do

3. Formulate a thesis/argument

4. Write your paper

- Your paper should PROVE your argument.
- Explain, compare, and contrast your documents
- Use context to help explain the documents

5. Revise

What NOT to Do

- Evaluate the documents rather than analyze them.
- Describe the documents with little analysis
- Analyze the documents using little historical context.
- Focus mostly on historical context and only briefly mention the documents.
- Use large block quotes.

Final Thoughts

- This paper is about the primary sources. Your paper should mostly focus on them.
- Be careful about plagiarism
- If you have questions, I am happy to answer them.
- If you would like me to read an outline or draft, I will do so during office hours